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those of any subsequent authors, Dr. Gilbert has set himself the task of ascertaining as accurately as possible "how Jesus and his revelation appeared to these men of the first century." He does not wish to place their interpretation before the Gospel itself, or to intimate that Christ, his life, death, and resurrection, is not infinitely more than any interpretation, even though it be apostolic and inspired; but he desires to get solely at the *facts* of the Christian scriptures, as distinguished from the peculiar points of view of the reporting authors. This task "is obviously historical," says Dr. Gilbert, "for it is nothing else than the investigation of a number of ancient Greek writings. The sole aim of the student who undertakes this task—and therefore our sole aim—is to learn the moral and religious views which these ancient Greek writings contain. It is not to defend these views. It is not to show their harmony or lack of harmony with the revelation of Jesus, or with the teaching of the Church in subsequent ages. The solitary question with which we here approach these documents is the question of fact—What do they teach?"

But, as we have intimated before, the emphasis is to be placed upon the facts taught, and not upon the point of view either of the original authors or of modern theology. "Our question is not," says the author, "What does John or Paul teach regarding God, or sin, or immortality, the Church, or the sacraments, or any other particular topic of religion or morals? If we had access to the living writers, we might take our theological categories along and ask them to give us their thought on the various subjects; but instead of the living writers we have some of their writings only, and we cannot assume that when they composed these they had in mind any of our mediæval or modern 'skeletons' of theology. We cannot hope, then, to do justice to any one of these writings if we go to it with a set of specific questions, and search out the words in it which bear upon this or that topic. A procedure of that kind is not interpretation, but is rather a violent attempt to make the New Testament authors think and speak according to our notions of Christian truth. This method is not historical."

The author has endeavored to accomplish his task in twenty brief chapters, nine of which are devoted to the teachings of Paul, five to the teachings of the minor writers, James, Peter, Jude, Hebrews, and the remaining chapters to the teachings of John and to the Apocalypse. The book, which is written from the purely orthodox point of view, has excellent indices.

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BIRTH A NEW CHANCE. By Columbus Bradford. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co. 1901. Pages, 363. Price, \$1.50.

Some time ago the editor received from the author of this book the following letter:

"I write to call your attention personally to a book of which I am the author—*Birth a New Chance*. I think possibly it may be of special interest to you, inasmuch as it was first entitled *Whence and Whither?* and had to be changed because of your own work bearing that title having got on the market ahead of mine.

My publishers would not accept my title because of your book. I purchased and read your book as soon as I noticed the title. I like your treatment of the inquiry, for the most part. It is rather disappointing to find you stopping short of a hope of individual immortality. From my work you may possibly get a suggestion on which you may yet be able to found a hope of personal persistence beyond death.

"I think a copy was sent *The Monist*, and a review of it may ere this have appeared in that magazine. I think you would find my book sufficiently vivacious in style for even vacation reading. Kindly let me know if you will receive a personal copy and examine it as soon as convenient."

The book was duly received, and I found that it contains a peculiar and new conception of regeneration. The author ventures into fields where a man accustomed to the strict methods of science would not be apt to follow him; but his arguments are interesting, and the flight of his fancy is bold. No doubt his ambition to solve the problem is as keen as my own, and on going over his book I wish to represent his arguments with impartiality, the more so since I cannot accept his views. I believe that many of our readers will be glad to become acquainted with an author who does not walk in the beaten tracks. I limit myself strictly to quotations, which I hope will be a fairly good sketch of the author's belief.

Mr. Bradford says:

"The human race is a growing race, in process of rising from animalhood to angelhood.

"Whatever of a Paradise or Eden he may have had before his fall, he can never have any higher heaven than this earth till he quits dying.

"To live is to live, and to be dead is to be dead. When a human being consciously dwells in a vital organism, called a body, he is alive. When his body collapses and dissolves, he is dead, and remains dead till he lives again in a new, organised vital body.

"The human personality, whether called the soul or the spirit, does not go out of the body at death, but retreats within the body, back into the germ from which that body grew, and from which, provided the "deeds done in the body" were not such as to destroy its vitality, there is ground to infer that another body will grow.

"This germ, or seed, into which the soul retreats at death answers well to the Apostle Paul's metaphor (1 Cor. xv. 37) of the 'bare grain,' which, he declares, is the only part of the body that is buried that will be in the new body when the dead person lives again.

"But 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God'; that is, cannot evolve a spiritual body from the present natural body. So, at the 'last day,' 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,' the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and the living shall be changed. But from all the examples furnished—those of Jesus, Lazarus, the daughter of Jairus, and the widow of Nain's son—we have reason to infer that there will be no dead at the last day except in well-preserved bodies.

"An individual lives again after death by being born again, and he is born again by virtue of having during his life maintained sympathetic connexions with his race. By deeds of kindness and mercy to his fellows, even on a small scale, he maintains this sympathetic connexion and comes under the operation of a law as unfailing as gravitation, which draws back the soul-seed of the dead man into the warm life-currents of the living race, and so assures his being born again.

"We live again, therefore, because of pity more than because of piety.

"Since no individual is wholly saved till he quits dying, there is no hope of individual salvation apart from race salvation.

"In this sense, all who die die unsaved.

"This race redemption from death is to come through a purification of our common hereditary stream. Hence the importance given in the Bible to a scheme of blood salvation. The perfection of the race on earth is to come by getting all its members so well born they will not need to die or be born any more. This is what Jesus called 'The Regeneration' (Matt. xix. 28; Mark x. 29, 30); Greek, *Palingenesis*, meaning, literally, 'the born-again era.'

"But, so far as we can observe, nothing material leaves the person when the breath ceases at his death. The matter of which he is composed will weigh precisely as much the moment after as the moment before his death. The material atom from which he grew goes back into the earth whence it came, and if the same individual ever has another corporeal existence there is strong ground for the inference that it will be a growth from the same seed he grew from before, and by virtue of the same agency,—reproduction.

"I recall a tradition concerning the historic Roger Williams which suggests one possible way, whether the actual way or not. It is stated that an apple-tree grew up at the head of the grave in which Mr. Williams was buried. Sometime in the after years this apple-tree was dug up, and it was discovered that the roots of the tree had played a kind of freak by following the course of the disintegrated body in the grave. A large root had formed in the trunk of the body, and then forked and followed the course of the two legs. So practically the whole body of Roger Williams had turned into the root of an apple-tree.

"The article relating this tradition was headed, 'Who ate Roger Williams?' It was scientifically assumed that many of the properties and particles of the body of Williams had entered into the apple-tree, and some of them into the apples that grew on the tree, and that therefore whoever had eaten those apples had, in a way, eaten Roger Williams. This, I say, suggests at least a possible way for the homoseed to pass from a dead and decaying body, through the medium of the vegetable kingdom, into a living body of its own species.

"But if this illustration strikes you as too cannibalistic, there are several ways whereby a soul, sealed up in a mere germ, may pass into the life currents that flow through some living body, and thus take its first step towards a renewed conscious and corporeal existence. We need only to think of this life-germ, this precious

soul-seed, as having a strong natural affinity for living human bodies, and so being drawn to those bodies by invisible life forces, as soon as its former body becomes sufficiently dissolved to release it. In cases of cremation this seed is doubtless released at once into the atmosphere, and is free to enter immediately into the soil to which it is specially indigenous; that is, into some living human body. We are told that we are constantly receiving into our bodies living germs of various kinds, and it is natural to suppose that human germs may find admission with the others.

" During the life of the body the soul gives constant evidence of the possession of a native instinct to preserve its body. This is strong enough in times of great peril to inhibit the function of the objective faculties, and cause the soul to lift the body and carry it out of danger. If it can exert itself thus for the preservation of its body during life, we have reason to believe that it can and will exert itself in some way for the rehabilitation of its body after death. If it can convey a living body out of danger, it can surely carry the seed in which it dwells till it finds a matrix in which to rebuild its body.

" But even if it were without this instinct, and should become after death merely a passive seed in the earth, the constant commerce going on between the earth and living human bodies would guarantee sooner or later the entrance of that seed into some living human body. And once having entered a living body, the organic machinery of that body will assign it to its proper place.

" That normal and matured human bodies do carry such seeds in their loins we are certain, and to my mind it seems more likely that they emerge from the earth instinct with life and find their lodgment in living bodies than that they are originally formed in those bodies. We call the propagation of our species *re-production*, which means producing over again. If the seeds from which members of our race are now growing are formed for the first time in the loins of their progenitors, then we should speak of the production rather than of the *re-production* of the species.

" Let us now direct our attention to some of the sayings of Jesus which seem to be explicable on no other ground than that of this hypothesis, that when we die our only hope of living again is in being born again. In order to make sure of living again in this way we must during our present life maintain sympathetic connexion with our race by deeds of kindness, helpfulness, and loving service.

" Jesus said :

" 'And I say unto you, make yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness ; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.'

" Jesus seems here to aim at giving the philosophy of the operation of the law of helpfulness which he so often enjoined. The friends we make by a beneficent use of money are to have something to do in bringing about our immortality. It seems to be this way :

" By observing this law of helpfulness we maintain sympathetic connexion with our race, so that when we 'fail,'—that is, die and dissolve,—the sympathetic

connexion we have established will draw the 'bare grain' in which each of us resides back into the life currents of living men, and enable us to live again and again until we, with the rest of the human race, attain immortal and spiritual bodies,—'everlasting habitations,' or 'eternal tabernacles,' as the Revised Version renders it.

"This same principle Jesus makes the basis of the general judgment. Condemnation of the lost is based upon sins of omission rather than sins of commission, and sins against man rather than against God. The mere neglect to minister to one's suffering fellow-beings is sufficient to sever the sympathetic connexion on which one depends to get back into life, and so there is no recourse for such a one but to remain forever bodiless in 'outer darkness.' This is also the danger Jesus so often referred to as threatening the rich man, the danger by a selfish life of making it impossible ever to live again. 'How hardly shall they that are rich enter into the kingdom of heaven.' To enter into that kingdom Jesus told Nicodemus that it was necessary to be born again; and the severing of sympathetic connexion with one's race by a selfish life will make such a new birth impossible.

"As my working hypothesis, I have adopted this: That every individual member of the human race lives more than one lifetime in this world, beginning each lifetime in the same way,—by being born,—and ending each by dying; that each individual will continue to do this till he rises above the necessity of dying, or sinks below the possibility of living."

The author concludes his book with the following sentences:

"Let us teach men that spiritual living will produce concrete results in this present world,—that it will in a few generations destroy death. In other words, let us teach men that if they will live after the spirit rather than after the flesh, they shall in due time see on this very earth a literal fulfilment of the prophecy in Revelation xxi. 4:

"'And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.'

P. C.

**DIE WIRKUNGEN DES GEISTES UND DER GEISTER IM NACHAPOSTOLISCHEN ZEIT-
ALTER BIS AUF IRÉNÄUS.** Von Heinrich Weinel, Lic. Theol., Dr. Phil.
Freiburg i. B., Leipzig and Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr (Paul
Siebeck). 1899. Pages, xii, 234.

The present volume is an investigation of an important feature of the early Christian congregations, viz., their belief in the operations of spirit and spirits. To the early Christians the idea that they had to struggle, not with men nor with worldly authorities, but with powerful spirits, was not an empty phrase but a most tremendous reality. They believed in the existence, not only of the kingdom of God, but also of a demoniacal empire, and the existence of evil spirits was fully proved to them by experience; for all error, all diseases, all heresies, all tempta-